

THE BEAT

Policing is about protecting people and I believe in putting people first.

Even though so much focus lately has been on money, our number crunching is never isolated from our goal to make Nottinghamshire safer. Tough decisions are unavoidable, but they are all ultimately taken with the purpose of safeguarding services in more critical areas of public safety. For every decision that has been made which alters the shape of the force, an action plan exists allowing us to meet the ongoing demand pressures. My Annual Report, of which you will read more of below, shows us that good can come out of a change culture.




Proposed reduction in PCSOs

We knew at the start of this financial year that some very difficult decisions would need to be taken to meet the demands placed upon us to save money. Unfortunately, that time has arrived and we are forced to consider reducing some PCSO posts in order to meet future demands with a greatly reduced funding allocation.

Over the past three years, Nottinghamshire Police has had to make savings of £42m which represents a budget reduction of 20%. Last year, our plan was to save £12.7m – this target was not fully achieved which means that from 1 April 2015, further savings of £12m are necessary. On top of this, the Government’s spending plans indicate further savings through to 2019-20 which are likely to mean a 50% reduction in our budget between 2010 and 2020.

As about 80% of our money is earmarked to pay for officers and staff it is inevitable that reductions have to be made. A new model of working has been created to meet the different levels of crime, risk and demand in different areas and this potentially could reduce



the numbers of PCSOs by 72.59 (FTE) and neighbourhood police officers by 18.5 (FTE).

While this is a small fraction of the total workforce, it is nonetheless a regrettable situation that we find ourselves in, and is entirely due to the current financial challenges.

The number of PCSOs in Nottinghamshire has grown by 50 to 317 since I came to office and this is recognition of the value they bring to community safety. However, looking at the scale of the savings required the only way of achieving such targets realistically is a major reconfiguration of the services we offer.

Discussions are still taking place including with trade unions, about how the new neighbourhood model will best take place. However, the Chief Constable and myself remain committed to neighbourhood policing and all areas of Nottinghamshire will continue to receive support.

Should the reductions go ahead as currently planned, the number of PCSOs in Nottinghamshire will remain higher than the other forces in the region.



National Audit Office report

The publication of a National Audit Office report into Financial Sustainability in the police has brought fresh attention to the challenges forces face to deliver services under unprecedented budgetary constraints.

This report recognises the difficulty police forces face in transforming services without a thorough understanding of demand, saying the Home Office needs to be better informed to discharge its responsibilities and to work with HMIC, the College of Policing and forces to gain a clearer picture of the health of the service.

As Chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners' Standing Group: Resources, Efficiency and Strategic Finance, I have been involved and welcome this report, which highlights the substantial savings already made by forces nationally.

Different forces have faced varying levels of cuts and it's clear that in the future there will need to be substantial restructuring and reorganisation. While forces have reserves, the NAO recognises that in eight of the nine forces visited these will be used in future years to aid restructuring. Balances are not uncommitted funds.

Clearly the Home Office needs to both have a greater understanding of the problems faced by individual forces and to better recognise signs of stress and viability.

Kick-starting the Big Debate on Policing

I was pleased to see that a discussion paper, commissioned from HMIC by a national advisory group of policing 'professionals, which I am a member, jumpstart an urgent national debate on the way policing is structured.

In general, the paper supports the findings of the National Audit Office in its own report on Austerity, published earlier this month, which brought fresh attention to the challenges forces face to deliver services under unprecedented budgetary constraints.

As Chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners' Standing Group: Resources, Efficiency and Strategic Finance, I welcomed the Audit Office report, which highlights the substantial savings already made by forces nationally.

Like all forces, we have faced and made big cuts to our budget over the last four years. The promise of similar sized cuts over the next four years goes well beyond a challenge. It will effectively see the amount of funding we receive from Central Government halved over the period 2010-2020 and sends the strongest possible signal that at every level, radical change is required.

You can't keep trimming budgets, expecting more for less and change the way services are delivered without risk. Yes, remove waste and duplication and make efficiencies but there is only so much we can achieve through 'remodeling'. We need to look at the wider picture and options open to us. We need, in short, to reinvent a large part of the wheel!

DOWNLOAD the [discussion paper](#) and the [NAO report here](#)

NRCN

National Rural Crime Network

SURVEY

Get involved and make a difference

RURAL ROUND-UP

Over the last few weeks rural residents and workers across the country have been able to make their voices count in a national survey about crime and policing in the countryside.

Run by the National Rural Crime Network (NRCN), this is the largest-ever survey regarding crime and anti-social behaviour in rural areas. The findings will help to lift the lid on the reality of criminality in the countryside and drive forward positive change and reform.

This supports the rural focus that I have made a priority in my Police and Crime Plan, which is now gaining pace across the county. Later in the year we will be unveiling a new website, dedicated to rural crime, to support those living in rural areas.



Community walkabouts

Every day of the week, volunteers and community safety workers are doing all they can to make Nottinghamshire's communities safer. My deputy, Chris Cutland, recently saw this in action when she took part in a walkabout in Eastwood alongside police officers, local councilors, volunteers and the local antisocial behaviour officer.

The multiagency teamwork that goes on behind the scenes in many of our towns should not be underestimated. These partnerships are making a real difference to local people's lives, many of which can be found in Eastwood.

During her tour of the town, Ms Cutland was given an insight into the educational and diversionary activities taking place to address the rise in crime in the area. Youth club activities have helped to reduce antisocial behaviour and reports of domestic violence are down due to a good relationship with the local specialist provider.



This month we've highlighted the work of all those volunteers in Nottinghamshire who are dedicating their time freely to help improve their communities. The recognition came as part of national Volunteers Week. To show my own personal appreciation, I sent a signed certificate to each of the people who volunteer for my own office including custody visitors, mystery shoppers and animal welfare lay visitors in thanks of their contribution.



Award for racial injustice campaigning

It was an honour this month to accept the 2015 award for Outstanding Contribution to Racial Injustice for the work that has taken place to drive forward change in the way police and members of the BME community interact.

The accolade was presented by Nottingham-based social justice charity Himmah in recognition of the commitment my team and I have shown towards addressing disproportionality within Stop and Search statistics which has traditionally impacted on trust between the police and BME communities.

There can be no greater sign of approval than to receive recognition from such a forward-thinking organisation as Himmah, whose dedication and passion for protecting people's rights is an example for all to follow. I am very grateful to the Himmah team for the insight they've given me into the issues and tensions that exist within some of our diverse communities and look forward to working with them in the future.

Reducing alcohol misuse

Tackling alcohol misuse remains a priority in Nottinghamshire and we're already reaping the positive benefits of responsible drinking schemes in the City. This month I took the opportunity of sharing some of this success and experience with delegates at the Tackling Alcohol and Creating Vibrant Economies seminar, organised by The Portman Group, which promotes responsible drinking and marketing.

The event, held at the Galleries of Justice Museum in the City, drew a wide range of policing representatives, local authority stakeholders, licensing officers and members of the drinks industry and focused on the work of the Home Office's Local Alcohol Action Areas (LAAAs) of which Nottingham is one.

Delegates heard how the aims of the LAAAs are well-matched with the priorities for Nottinghamshire as a whole and have contributed to the overall progress of my Alcohol Strategy and Action Plan. Some of the achievements thus far include the standards-raising Best Bar None, Purple Flag and Pubwatch. Behaviour-changing initiatives like Responsible Drinking, Ending Alcohol Harm and the Drinkaware Campaign have also helped to raise awareness and reduce problems.

Learning from one another helps us to direct resources to the most effective and appropriate projects which is vital in view of today's financial challenges.

Third annual report published

One of my duties as Police and Crime Commissioner is to publish an annual report at the end of each financial year detailing the progress and improvements I've delivered according to my Police and Crime Plan.

Recently, I presented my third annual report to the Police and Crime Panel – the body responsible for overseeing my decisions and scrutinising my performance while in post.

The 2014-15 report spells out the ongoing financial challenges we will face over the next 12 months but it also reports on the huge inroads we've made in the way we address community safety. The report also touches on the investments we've made in early intervention and crime prevention and new technology.

During the year, I have funded a number of voluntary, sector-led projects to develop support for young victims of crime including a City and County-wide service to support teenage survivors of domestic abuse as well as counselling support for young victims of sexual violence and group work with vulnerable young women. Meanwhile, vulnerable people suffering mental health crisis have been given the support they need through the Street Triage team, which has seen a 43.8% reduction in the number of non-crime related mental health patients detained in the force's custody suites.

I'm very proud of the many achievements we made in 2014-15 and it is testament to the dedication and commitment of Nottinghamshire's police officers, staff and volunteers as well as our partners and stakeholders. Regardless of our financial constraints, we are building a police service for the future and I'm confident the work we do now will deliver bigger dividends in the years ahead.

Tackling Domestic Violence in Faith Communities

It is a shocking but very real fact that more than four out of ten violent incidents reported to Nottinghamshire Police involves domestic violence of some description. Ending violence like this is not as simple as punishing a perpetrator, victims need time and support to recover from the abuse and there is a deep need to heal those who witness this behaviour such as children.

These issues were the topic of discussion when my deputy, Chris Cutland, spoke at the Tackling Domestic Violence in Faith Communities conference this month.

A long-time campaigner against violence, Ms Cutland told delegates that victims still felt a great source of shame at being abused and in many cases were still being blamed by society and the people around them. The Deputy Commissioner spoke of faith being a "really important aspect in many people's lives, setting our standards and often our moral compass". It is important that we all understand that many aspects of domestic violence and abuse are illegal, immoral and against the teachings of our religions. We therefore have a collective duty to support victims and bring perpetrators to account.

Addressing the conference alongside DCI Yvonne Dales, from Nottinghamshire Police, Ms Cutland said the force was committed to working in partnership with others to ensure support for victims and survivors. Today, domestic violence is much more victim-focused and the police are far better trained to protect and support victims.

Keeping safe this summer

While we might not have seen much of summer yet, there's always the promise of more hot weather ahead. Long, bright days are just what we need to relax after a hard day's work and it's equally enjoyable to combine such relaxation with your favourite tittle. There's nothing wrong with this. It's drinking to excess that is the problem. Taking care with the amount of alcohol we consume is not only respectful of our own health but is also being courteous to the people around us. Excessive alcohol can lead to disorder and this



doesn't just mean the local nightclub on a Friday and Saturday night – it happens as much at civilised garden parties and barbecues and wherever there is heavy drinking involved.

The message this summer is to stay in control. Drinking responsibly is not boring. It makes sense. We also need to remember lock up our valuables and take greater care of our personal belongings. Windows and doors should always be closed and locked when you go out, regardless of the temperature. Don't allow the heat to melt your judgement. Always be vigilant.



Nottingham Street Pastors scheme saved

It is often the smaller scale, unseen work that goes on within communities that delivers the most positive change. The Nottingham Street Pastors scheme is one such project which helps to look after vulnerable people enjoying a night out in the city centre, taking pressure off the police and the medical services which can devote time and resources to more serious incidents.

The Street Pastors scheme had been receiving funding from Comic Relief and now that this has come to an end, the future looked uncertain. However, I am delighted that my own office, the Nottingham Business Improvement District (BID), and intu, the owners of the Victoria and Broadmarsh shopping centres, have collectively agreed to continue this funding for the next five months until a more sustainable funding solution is found.

The Nottingham BID already supports the Street Pastors as part of its activities to ensure a safer late night economy in the city centre and had plans to provide additional support to them, assuming that the BID secures a second term when it comes up for renewal this Summer.

New investment in digital investigation technology

Earlier this year, Nottinghamshire Police was chosen to receive almost £3m of funding to be invested into advanced technology to help fight crime.

The will fund a series of improved investigation facilities and follows my successful bid on behalf of Nottinghamshire and other East Midlands forces, for a slice of the Home Office's Innovation Fund for 2015-16.

The funding will support new collaborative projects involving various forces in Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and in one case Derbyshire. The bulk of the funding (£1.355M) will be used to develop the East Midlands Operational Support Service (EMOpSS) Mobile Working partnership agreement which has seen the Force merging resources allocated to Roads Policing, Armed Policing, Police Dogs and POLSA search teams into one unit to address the threats posed regionally. The funding will help to build a new mobile ICT system allowing all four forces to have access to real-time information.

The Home Office has awarded a further £1.267m to help fund a new integrated ICT system enabling the regional forces to record and share intelligence on non-crime incidents that cannot be recorded as offences but could be vitally important for intelligence purposes.

Finally, the Home Office has awarded £100,000 to forces in Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Northamptonshire towards the cost of a new Digital Lab within the East Midlands Special Operations Unit. This will enhance the unit's e-forensic examination capabilities and ability to investigate offences in relation to cybercrime, online child sexual exploitation, serious and organised crime and terrorism.

KEEP ON TALKING

I'm delighted that so many people contact me, with problems, compliments and comments. This is particularly important as I need to be able to listen to your views and learn from them and also know that you can keep up to date with what my Deputy, my team and I are doing.

Whatever I do, I am answerable to you, the electorate. You can contact me at any time to ask questions or put your views across.

You can visit:

www.nottinghamshire.pcc.police.uk

You can follow me:

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